

JOE WARDY  
MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON  
CITY MANAGER

GEORGE G. SARMIENTO, AICP  
DIRECTOR



**PLANNING, RESEARCH &  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

5/20/05

**CITY COUNCIL**

SUSAN AUSTIN  
DISTRICT NO. 1

ROBERT A. CUSHING, JR.  
DISTRICT NO. 2

JOSE ALEXANDRO LOZANO  
DISTRICT NO. 3

JOHN F. COOK  
DISTRICT NO. 4

PRESI ORTEGA, JR.  
DISTRICT NO. 5

PAUL J. ESCOBAR  
DISTRICT NO. 6

VIVIAN ROJAS  
DISTRICT NO. 7

ANTHONY W. COBOS  
DISTRICT NO. 8

**TO:** The Honorable Mayor and City Council  
Joyce A Wilson, City Manager  
Patricia D. Adauto, Deputy City Manager

**FROM:** Frank Delgado, Northwest Neighborhood Planner

**THROUGH:** George Sarmiento, Director

**SUBJECT:** City Council Agenda: May 24, 2005 Public Hearing  
**Supplemental Back-up for following item:**  
An ordinance incorporating the El Paso Water Utilities Public Service Board Westside Master Plan as a specific study area plan into the city's comprehensive plan, *The Plan for El Paso*, and which plan shall amend the *Plan For El Paso* and the Year 2025 General Land Use Map incorporated therein. **(District 1)**  
[Planning Research and Development, Frank Delgado, (915) 541-4730]

This item was scheduled for public hearing on April 5, 2005. Please refer to the previous back-up. At that meeting, City Council directed that this item be postponed to allow for a meeting of Representative Susan Austin, representatives from the PSB, Dr. Bonart, and other interested parties regarding additional items to be incorporated into the final master plan. This meeting was held on April 27, 2005 and a compromise was reached during a meeting. The language below summarizes the compromise agreement:

The PSB's *Westside Master Plan* and the City's Comprehensive Plan (*The Plan for El Paso*) shall be as previously presented to City Council, except that it will reflect the following:

1. The Southernmost Arroyo—From Helen of Troy west to Lost Dog Trail, the southern rim of the arroyo is located essentially along the line marked and initialed on a map at the meeting and the arroyo shall be considered to "end" on the west at Lost Dog Trail. This portion of the arroyo shall be left natural from the "rim-to-rim" except that it may include (i) a hybrid channel as appropriate to carry stormwater drainage, alongside which there may be a developed hike/bike trail; and (ii) as the south side of that hybrid channel at the east end of the arroyo a ponding area as needed to safely handle stormwater drainage, either park/pond or man-made, covering as little area as feasible and less than 8 (eight) acres. Where the PSB previously designated an elementary school and a middle school, there will not be development inside the rim of the arroyo, but outside the rim the PSB may designate the area for school(s) or homes as it may hereafter determine.

2. Transmountain Corridor—Along Transmountain Road starting where the road begins to angle to the northeast and where the PSB has previously designated open space on the south side of Transmountain Road comprising a triangle with an angle of +/- 20 (twenty) degrees running east to the Mountain Development Area boundary, as marked and initialed on a map at the meeting. Such open space on the north end and south sides of Transmountain Road shall generally provide the scenic corridor currently required in the City's Comprehensive Plan and with such open space it will not be necessary to maintain PMD zoning in this area or to the east of Transmountain Road except that appropriate landscaping and recreation trails should be continued.

Attachment A contains spreadsheets detailing the proposed Land Uses of the original plan (April 5), and the compromise plan (April 27) as well as a comparison of the two plans to highlight their differences.

Attachment B shows the original plan map showing proposed land uses. The areas where changes are proposed for the compromise are identified on this map. This will ease comparison to the compromise plan map. Attachment C shows the revised plan map and represents the compromise agreement. The areas where changes are proposed from the original are identified to ease comparison. Attachment D is a black and white of the compromise agreement with the land uses identified. Attachment E is the revised Trails Plan.

Should you have any questions about this item, please contact Frank Delgado at 541-4730 or George Sarmiento at 541-4194.

## **Exhibit A**

### **Specific Study Area Plan for PSB Westside Master Plan Properties**

This document and the accompanying maps constitute a specific study area plan amendment to *The Plan for El Paso*. The study area is specifically that property addressed in the PSB Westside Master Plan Land Study submission of January 2005, consisting of approximately 1850 acres of City owned land straddling Transmountain Road and abutting the Franklin Mountains State Park on the western side of the Franklin Mountains. The location is shown as provided in Figure 1.

The land use plan for the study area contains a mix of land uses that blends commercial and residential with open space, natural arroyos, buffers, access to the Franklin Mountain State Park, and other community amenities. Taken together, these amenities are designed to create a desirable quality-of-life for all future residents. A large band of open space adjacent to the Franklin Mountains State Park on the eastern part of the study area is maintained. A network of natural arroyos supplements the open space throughout the study area.

#### **Land Use Characteristics**

Total Land Area	1,850 acres
Potential Number of Dwelling Units	4,731 Dwelling Units
Potential Amount of Commercial Development	1,707,008 square feet
Acreage of Parks/Open Space	667 Acres
Developable Acres	1024 Acres
Roads and Infrastructure	168 Acres
Average Dwelling Units/Developable Acre	2.6

#### **PROPOSED LAND USE CATEGORIES**

The current approved land use map is shown in Figure 2. The land use map for this amendment, once approved, is shown in Figure 3. The amended map divides the study area into different land use categories designated by color and further detailed with a two or three letter acronym. The categories reflect the allowable future land uses and development intensities intended for that segment of the study area. The land use map and text will be used as the major implementation tool for carrying out development review processes. It does not specify zoning for any area. Instead, it should be seen to guide future zoning decisions in a way that ensures that any proposed zoning conforms to the density guidelines issued herein. Along with this specific study area plan, the City Council of El Paso, in a resolution dated Nov 16, 2004, directed that all sales of land within the study area contain “covenants necessary to effectuate applicable portions” of this plan. It is recognized in the same resolution that this plan may be “amended from time to time.”

#### **Residential Land Use Categories**

The land use map designates four residential land use categories that provide for single-family and multi-family housing at varying densities. The type and intensity of development for each category is described below for purposes of this specific study area only:

**Low Density Residential (LD)**

Low Density Residential (LD) category shall have no more than 2 single-family dwelling units/gross acre. There are approximately 151.5 acres of LD residential land use within the study area.

**Medium Density Residential (MD)**

Medium Density Residential (MD) category shall have no more than 4.5 single-family dwelling units/gross acre. MD land makes up 204.2 acres.

**Medium High Density (MHD)**

Medium High Density (MHD) category shall have single-family dwelling units at no more than 6 dwelling units/ gross acre. MHD land makes up 474.6 acres. The MHD land is intended as a transition zone between highest density residential and office development and the lower density residential development.

**Apartment Office (A/O)**

Apartment/Office category shall allow higher density residential land use to co-locate with office uses, thus creating mixed use nodes that would allow people to live in close proximity to where they work. A/O land use is intended to promote pedestrian activity, transit use, and lower incidences of single-occupant vehicle travel. A/O designated land accounts for 73.5 acres.

**Commercial Land Use**

There are two primary commercial land use categories located within the study area.

**Commercial (C)**

This category is intended to identify locations for commercial development types of varying intensities and designs. Commercial land use is to be located adjacent to the higher density residential development, with the intent of promoting transit use and pedestrian activity. There are approximately 80.1 acres of commercial land designation in the study area.

**Commercial/Office Park (C/O)**

The Commercial Office Park category is planned for more intense /office and commercial development to occur. These areas are intended for heavier commercial and business uses and to provide significant employment opportunities for the residents of the area without leading to incompatibility between land uses. The business park category covers approximately 39.9 acres.

**Parks and Open Space**

A major feature of the land use plan is the designation of the parks and open space categories.



There are over 500 acres of open space, the majority of which is located on the eastern side of the property. This open space provides a buffer between developed areas and the Franklin Mountain State Park. Within the developed areas of the site, additional open space is provided by permanently preserving the majority of the arroyos running through the property in their natural state.

### **Parks and Park/Ponds (P and P/P)**

There are 10 small, pocket-scaled parks locations designated in the study area. Nine of these parks include drainage ponding areas. Each park is positioned to serve the distinct neighborhoods that are envisioned. Developed parkland accounts for 104.8 total acres within the land study area.

### **Open Space/Natural Arroyos (OS and NA)**

Open space will be one of the defining features of the study area. It is the intention of this plan that land designated as open space or as natural arroyos will remain in an undisturbed natural state except that existing undeveloped hiking/biking trails, as defined below, will be permitted. The open space is located on the eastern part of the property, abutting the Franklin Mountains State Park, providing a buffer between the park and development. In addition, the majority of arroyos on the property will be left in their natural state and form important linkages between the development and the open space. A total of 562.6 acres of open space or natural arroyos is designated on the land use map.

### **Drainage and Water Facilities (D/T, RSV and Pond)**

Some areas are designated as for drainage and water facilities. D/T indicates an improved drainage channel with a multi-use trail incorporated alongside. RSV indicates a reservoir location and Pond is a retention pond. Two ponds without parks are also designated on the land use plan. Treatment of the improved drainage channel in or along flowpath 38A shall be in accordance with the provisions of the City Council Resolution dated November 16, 2004.

### **Trail System**

A network of trails should be located throughout the property, capable of serving both recreational and transportation purposes. This system is shown in Figure 4.

There are three different types of trails on the property. They are:

- ***Multi-use Trails*** – Trail that can be used for jogging, biking, and/or walking. These trails link commercial and office areas to residential development.
- ***Developed Hiking/Biking Trails*** – These types of trails are the most prevalent trail in the development. These trails run along the side of most of the major roadways developed within the land study area including Paseo del Norte, Helen of Troy Road, and Transmountain Road (Transmountain Road already has significant bicycle activity for those people accessing trails in the Franklin Mountains State Park).
- ***Undeveloped Hiking/Biking Trails*** – Undeveloped trails are the unpaved off road trails that exist along arroyos and in the open space areas due to previous usage. These trails should be no more than six feet wide and the surface should be the existing soil. Minimal or no development or construction is required and existing natural vegetation should comprise the landscaping.

- **Trail Heads** – There are three developed trailheads designated in open space areas. These trail heads provide bicyclists and hikers with a staging area to begin their rides or hikes into the open space or Franklin Mountains State Park. These trail heads will have parking areas and other amenities. Roads to the trailhead will be provided by the site developers and included in their development plans.

## **Community Facilities**

To serve the public service needs of area residents, various community facilities are planned for the area. The following community facility locations are indicated on the land use map:

### **Public Schools (MS and ES)**

The Canutillo ISD has indicated that two elementary schools (ES) and one middle school (MS) will be needed to serve the anticipated population. In addition, a desire was expressed by several entities for parks and schools to be co-located, which has been reflected in the land use plan. All school sites have also been planned adjacent to the trail network for more efficient and safe pedestrian access.

The elementary schools are located central to the neighborhoods and will generally serve an area within ½ to 1-mile radius. One elementary school site is located north of Transmountain Road while the other is planned for the southern part of the property. In addition to being co-located with the parks, the southern elementary school will also be located in the vicinity of the land study area's middle school.

### **Public Safety Facilities (FS)**

There will be a need for a fire department substation (FS). The substation should be located in the southwestern part of the property off of Paseo del Norte.

# Attachment A

## SUMMARY OF LAND USE COMPARISONS 2-May-05 WESTSIDE MASTER PLAN

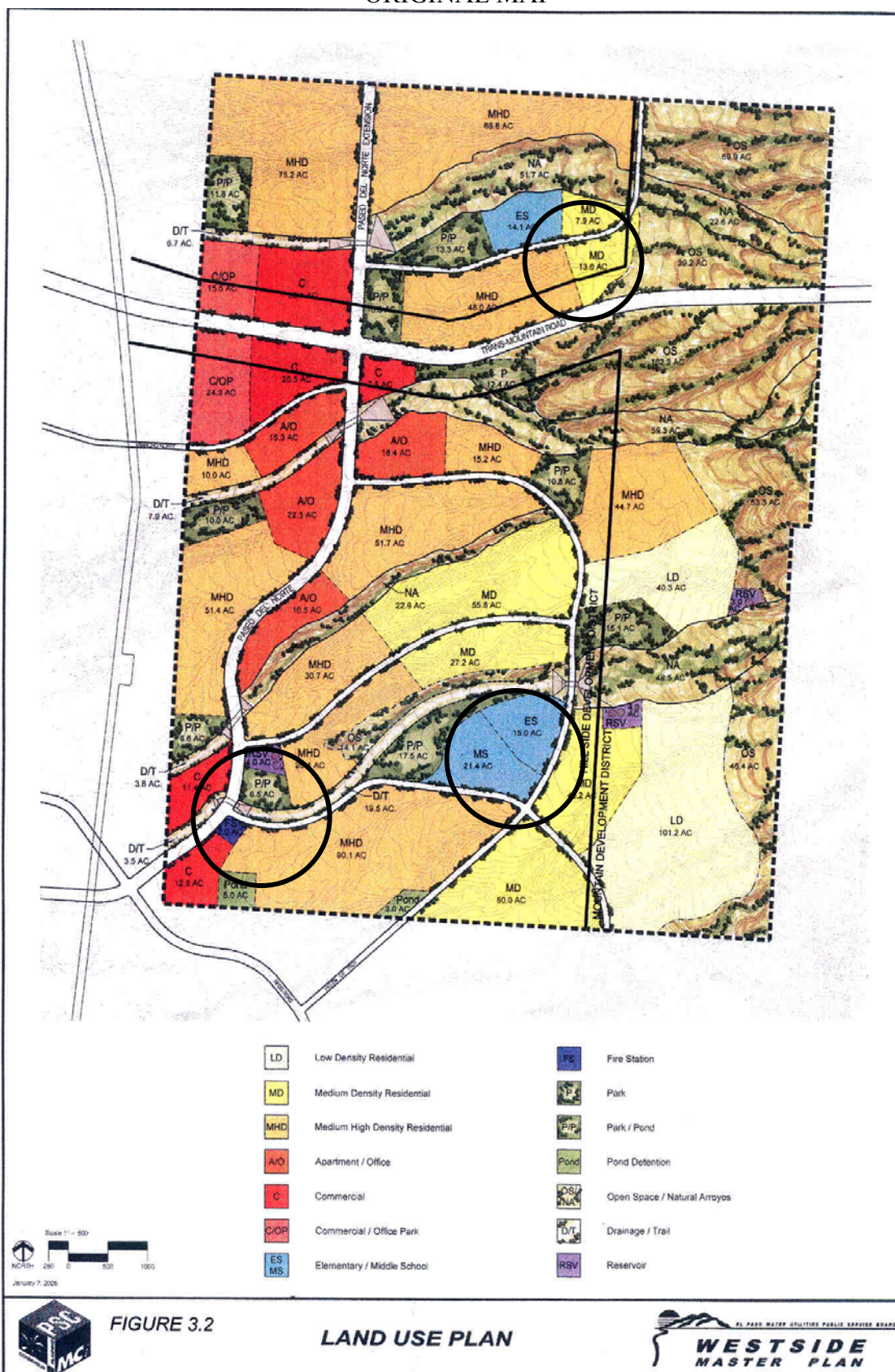
Plan as Presented April 5, 2005						Revised per April 27, 2005			
Land Use	DU's/ac.	Size (acres)	% of Total	Total DU's	Building SF	Size (acres)	% of Total	Total DU's	Building SF
Low Density Residential	2	141.5	7.65%	283		151.5	8.19%	303	
Medium Density Residential	4.5	190.7	10.31%	858		204.2	11.04%	919	
Medium High Density Residential	6	511.7	27.66%	3,070		474.6	25.65%	2,848	
Apartment/Office <sup>1</sup>		73.5	3.97%	662	400,208	73.5	3.97%	662	400,208
Commercial <sup>2</sup>		80.1	4.33%		872,289	80.1	4.33%		872,289
Commercial/Office Park <sup>2</sup>		39.9	2.16%		434,511	39.9	2.16%		434,511
Middle School		21.4	1.16%			20.0	1.08%		
Elementary School		29.1	1.57%			29.1	1.57%		
Fire Station		2.0	0.11%			2.0	0.11%		
Parks		114.3	6.18%			104.8	5.66%		
Open Space/Natural Arroyos		530.1	28.65%			562.6	30.41%		
Drainage/Trails		49.2	2.66%			41.2	2.23%		
Reservior		11.0	0.59%			11.0	0.59%		
Right-of-Way		55.5	3.00%			55.5	3.00%		
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>1,850.0</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>4,873</b>	<b>1707008</b>	<b>1,850.0</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>4,731</b>	<b>1707008</b>
Developable Land		1,037.4	acres			1,023.8	acres		
Open Space		530.1	acres			562.6	acres		
Recreation		644.4	acres			667.4	acres		
Developable Parks		114.3	acres			104.8	acres		
Gross Residential		2.6	du/acre			2.6	du/acre		
Gross SF (Commercial)		1,707,008	SF			1,707,008	SF		

<sup>1</sup> Assumes 50% Apartment use at 18 du/ac and 50% Office use at .25 FAR.

<sup>2</sup> Assumes .25 FAR.

COMPARISON OF PLANS			
LAND USES	# Units Difference	# Acres Difference	Dwelling Units per Acre
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>			
Low-Density	20	10.0	2
Medium Density	61	13.5	4.5
High Density	(222)	(37.1)	6
Apartment/Office	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>(141)</b>	<b>(13.6)</b>	<b>2.56</b>

# Attachment B ORIGINAL MAP





LD Low Density Residential

MD Medium Density Residential

MHD Medium High Density Residential

A/O Apartment / Office

C Commercial

C/OP Commercial / Office Park

ES/MS Elementary / Middle School

FS Fire Station

P Park

P/P Park / Pond

Pond Pond Detention

OS/NA Open Space / Natural Arroyos

D/T Drainage / Trail

RSV Reservoir

Scale 1" = 500'

NORTH

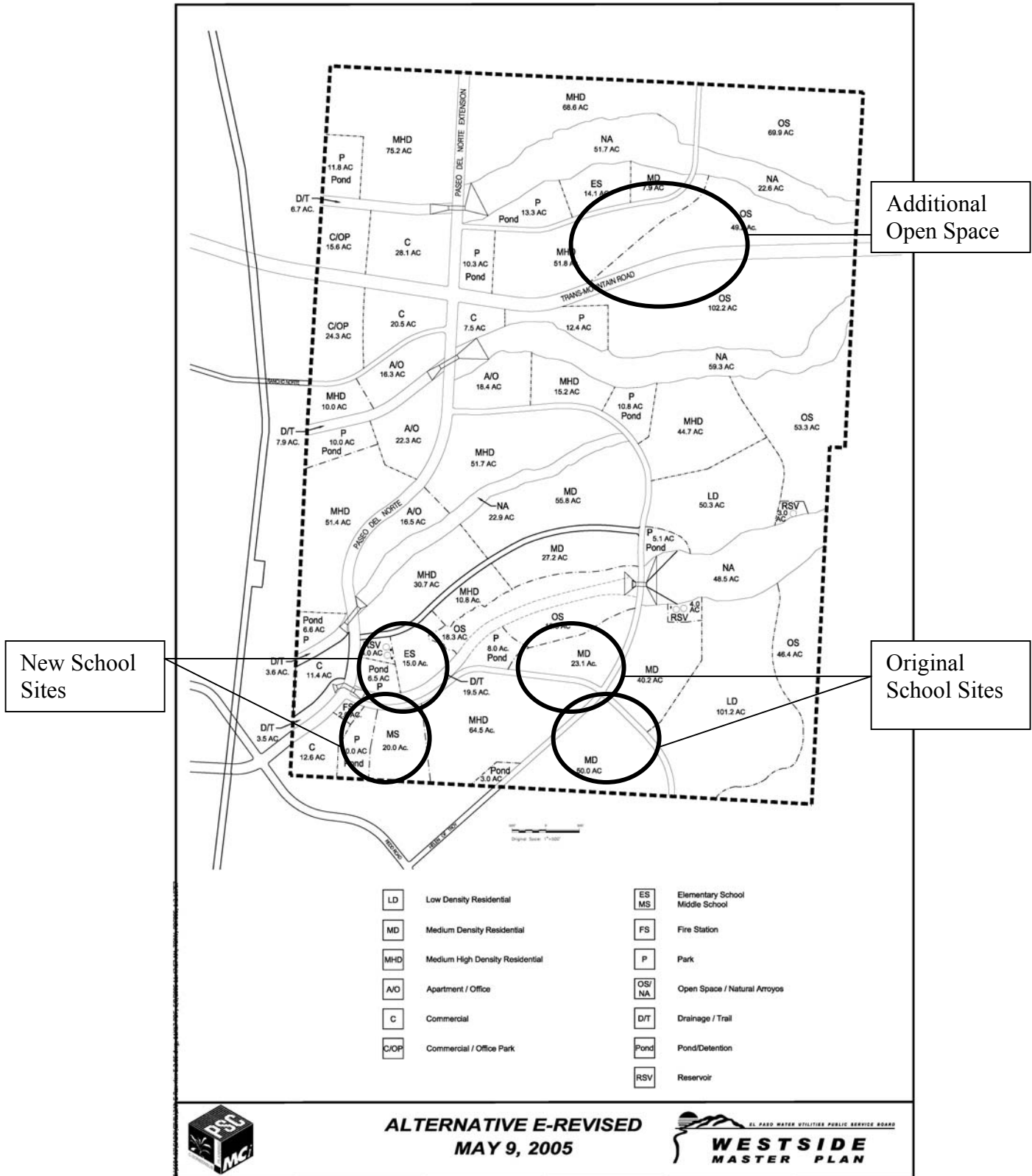
250 500 750 1000

May 20, 2009

LAND USE PLAN

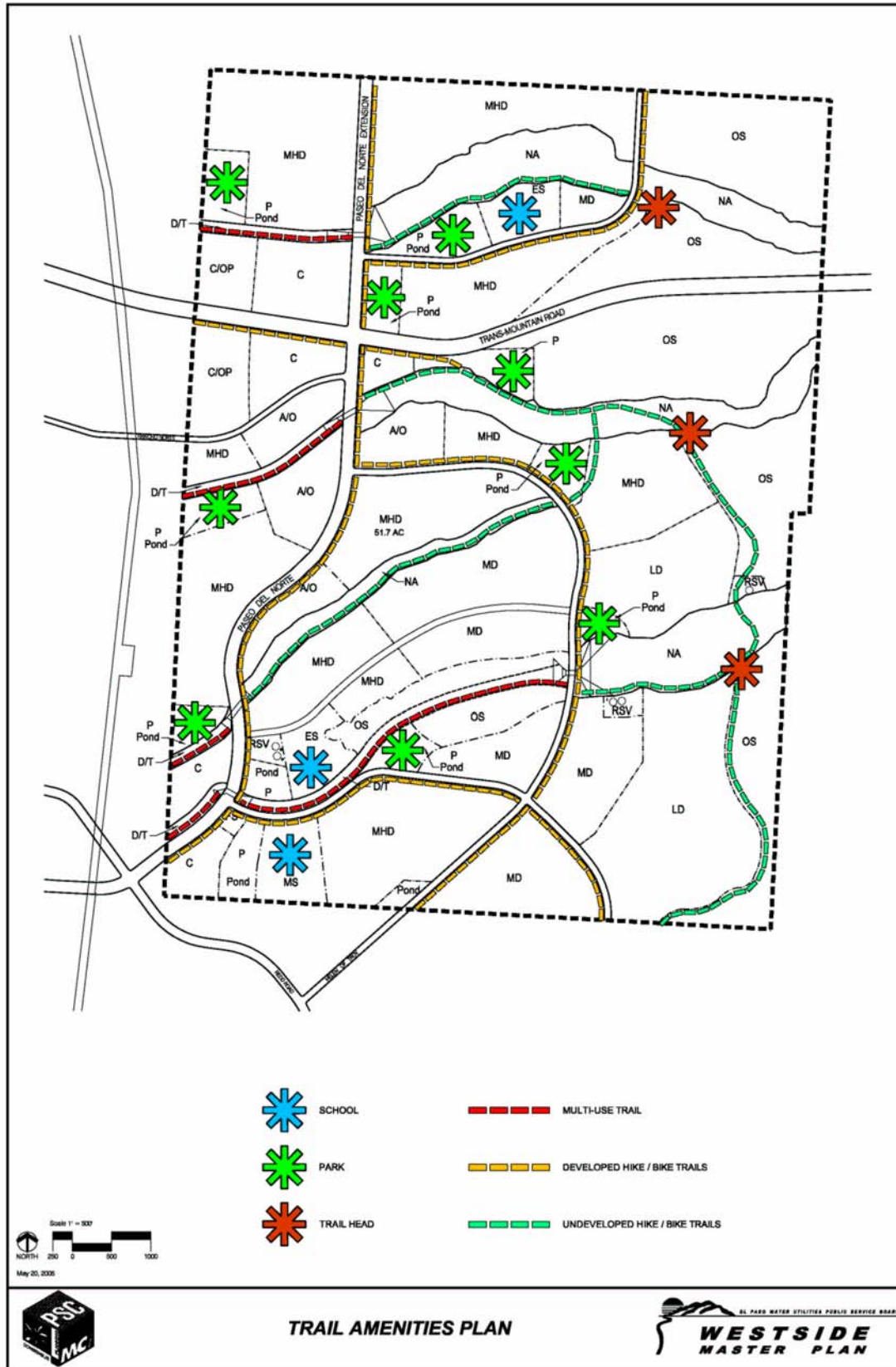
WESTSIDE MASTER PLAN

Attachment D  
REVISED MAP – Compromise Agreement





# ATTACHMENT E Trail Amenities Plan





**Martinez, Donna M.**

---

**From:** Austin, Susan F.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 04, 2005 4:29 PM  
**To:** Martinez, Donna M.  
**Subject:** FW: PSB Westside Master Plan  
**Importance:** High

This is the email to put in record with 28E on May 3 CCA

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Kyle Womack [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 29, 2005 7:43 AM  
**To:** 'Austin, Susan F.'; Nick Costanzo [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Mike Pink; Terry Bilderback  
**Subject:** RE: PSB Westside Master Plan  
**Importance:** High

I do not have a problem with the language you are suggesting. I do think we need to agree on the logistics of making the revisions and obtaining final approval.

- It is my intent to have a revised (uncolored) map drawn and distributed to appropriate parties next week. This map would show land uses and acreages to correspond with your text revisions. I think it would be good to have this group review the map before we make all the required supporting changes to the text, acreages, and calculations contained in the Land Study and in the Master Plan
- Once everyone has reviewed the map, it will take us about two weeks to fully complete edits, changes, map coloring, and updates and to reprint both the Land Study and to the Master Plan to produce a final document.

I guess my question is when is it most appropriate to put this back on the Council agenda. Can the Council "approve" the master plan based on your text revisions and then let PSB print final copies as record copies, or will they prefer to see the final corrected copies of the Land Study and the Master Plan before they put this back on the agenda? If the latter is true, then I think we are looking at May 24 or May 31.

The biggest impact of these changes will be to relocate the school sites. This may also require presenting to the school district the proposed new locations for their facilities...

Again, my plan is to have a revised map to you by next week.

Please call if you have any questions...

Kyle Womack, P.E.  
Vice President/Office Manager  
Parkhill, Smith & Cooper, Inc.  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

5/4/2005

-----Original Message-----

From: Austin, Susan F. [REDACTED]  
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2005 3:48 PM  
To: 'REDACTED'; Austin, Susan F.; Sarmiento, George G.; [REDACTED]  
Cc: City Manager; Wardy, Joe; Adauto, Patricia D.  
Subject: PSB Westside Master Plan  
Importance: High

As you requested, this email will memorialize the understandings reached at our meeting yesterday, April 27, 2005, at the PSB offices, regarding the PSB Westside Master Plan and the amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan to reflect that Master Plan. The addressees shown attended the meeting and initialed their agreement to a memo and on a map. The Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan shall be as previously presented to City Council, except that it will reflect the following:

1. The Southernmost Arroyo -- From Helen of Troy east to Lost Dog Trail, the southern rim of the arroyo is located essentially along the line marked and initialed on a map at the meeting and the arroyo shall be considered to "end" on the west at Lost Dog Trail. This portion of the arroyo shall be left natural from "rim-to-rim" except that it may include (i) a hybrid channel as appropriate to carry stormwater drainage, alongside which there may be a developed hike/bike trail; and (ii) on the south side of that hybrid channel at the east end of the arroyo a ponding area as needed to safely handle stormwater drainage, either park/pond or manmade, covering as little area as feasible and less than 8 acres. Where the PSB previously designated an elementary school and a middle school, there will not be development inside the rim of the arroyo, but outside the rim the PSB may designate the area for school(s) or homes as it may hereafter determine.

2. Transmountain Corridor -- Along Transmountian Road starting where the road begins to angle to the northeast and where the PSB has previously designated open space on the south side of Transmountain Road, there will be additional open space designated on the north side of Transmountain Road comprising a triangle with an angle of about 20 degrees running east to the Mountain Development Area boundary, as marked and initialed on a map at the meeting. Such open space on the north and south sides of Transmountain Road shall generally provide the scenic corridor currently required in the City's Comprehensive Plan and with such open space it will not be necessary to maintain PMD zoning in this area or to the east along Transmountain Road except that appropriate landscaping and recreation trails should be continued.

Please review this language and advise all addressees immediately if you require any changes to reflect our agreement.  
Also, please send me a reply email indicating that you received this email.

If you receive this email and I do not hear from you by Friday, Apr 29 at 4pm, I will assume the language is OK with you.

It is my intent at the City Council Meeting on May 3, 2005, to submit this revision into the record and move to direct the City Manager to work with the PSB to make such revisions to the Master Plan and Comprehensive Plan as appropriate to carry out this agreement and to come back to the Council with the revised ordinance in 2 weeks.

5/4/2005

Susan Austin,  
City Representative, District 1

To Paula Apodaca: Please forward immediately to Ed Archuleta, Nick  
Costanzo, and Joe Lares

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS**  
**AGENDA ITEM DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

**DEPARTMENT:** Planning, Research & Development

**AGENDA DATE:** Introduction – March 22, 2005  
Public Hearing – April 05, 2005

**CONTACT PERSON/PHONE:** Frank Delgado, 541-4730

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** 1

**SUBJECT:**

An ordinance incorporating the El Paso Water Utilities Public Service Board Westside Master Plan as a specific study area plan into the city's comprehensive plan, *The Plan for El Paso*, and which plan shall amend the *Plan For El Paso* and the Year 2025 General Land Use Map incorporated therein. (DISTRICT 1) [George Sarmiento (915) 541-]

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

See attached staff report.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

On Tuesday, November 16, 2004, Council adopted a resolution, authorizing Planning, Research & Development to proceed with an amendment to the comprehensive plan to modify the 2025 Proposed General Land Use Map and Major Thoroughfare Plan Map.

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:** N/A

**BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:**

- February 23, 2005—Development Coordinating Committee voted unanimously to **recommend APPROVAL** with the condition that the PSB coordinate with Traffic Engineering on one of the proposed arterials.
- February 25, 2005—El Paso Mountain Committee voted unanimously to **recommend APPROVAL** with the condition that there be a scenic buffer on the north side of Transmountain Road, comparable to the one on the south side.
- March 10, 2005—City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7 to 0) to recommend **APPROVAL** to amend the 2025 Proposed General Land Use Map of *The Plan for El Paso* with the following conditions that:
  1. A scenic corridor along Transmountain Road of at least 100 feet on the north side of Transmountain Road be retained.
  2. City Council strongly consider use of a land trust to preserve natural arroyos and open space.
  3. City Council consider for its final decision the details of the agreement reached on November 12th

\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**LEGAL:** (if required) Matt Watson

**FINANCE:** (if required) N/A

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** George Sarmiento, AICP

**APPROVED FOR AGENDA:**

**CITY MANAGER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

JOE WARDY  
MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON  
CITY MANAGER

GEORGE G. SARMIENTO, AICP  
DIRECTOR

**PLANNING, RESEARCH &  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

March 11, 2005

**CITY COUNCIL**

SUSAN AUSTIN  
DISTRICT NO. 1

ROBERT A. CUSHING, JR.  
DISTRICT NO. 2

JOSE ALEXANDRO LOZANO  
DISTRICT NO. 3

JOHN F. COOK  
DISTRICT NO. 4

PAUL J. ESCOBAR  
DISTRICT NO. 6

VIVIAN ROJAS  
DISTRICT NO. 7

ANTHONY W. COBOS  
DISTRICT NO. 8

**TO:** The Honorable Mayor and City Council  
Joyce A. Wilson, City Manager

**FROM:** Frank Delgado, Northwest Neighborhood Planner

**THROUGH:** George Sarmiento, Director

**SUBJECT:** Ordinances to amend the City's comprehensive plan, *The Plan for El Paso* and *The Major Thoroughfare Plan* to conform with the PSB's *Westside Master Plan*.

---

At its public hearing of March 10, 2005, the City Plan Commission (CPC) voted unanimously (7 to 0) to recommend **APPROVAL** to amend the 2025 Proposed General Land Use Map of *The Plan for El Paso* with the following conditions:

3. that a scenic corridor along Transmountain Road of at least 100 feet on the north side of Transmountain Road be retained.
4. that City Council strongly consider use of a land trust to preserve natural arroyos and open space.
5. that City Council consider for its final decision the details of the agreement reached on November 12th.

At this same hearing, the CPC voted unanimously (7 to 0) to recommend **APPROVAL** to amend the 2025 Major Thoroughfare Map of *The Plan for El Paso*.

On February 25, 2005, the El Paso Mountain Committee voted unanimously to recommend **APPROVAL** of both ordinances with the condition that:

1. there be a scenic buffer on the north side of Transmountain Road, comparable to the one on the south side.

The changes to the comprehensive plan contained in the two ordinances involve changes to the Proposed General Land Use Map and the Major Thoroughfare Plan Map respectively. Council adopted a resolution on November 16, 2004 directing the Planning, Research & Development Department to amend *The Plan for El Paso* to ensure it was in conformance with proposed changes contained in the El Paso Water Utilities Public Service Board *Westside Master Plan* under consideration as a Land Study application. A copy of the resolution is attached.

## **STAFF REPORT**

***Amendments to  
The Plan for El Paso:*** 2025 Proposed Land Use Map  
Major Thoroughfare Plan

***Representative:*** El Paso Water Utilities-Public Service Board EPWU-PSB

***Legal Description:*** Portions of SJ Larkin Survey 267,  
Portions of SJ Larkin Survey 268 Abst 10069, Portions of SJ  
Larkin Survey 269 Abst 10070,  
Portion of Nellie D. Mundy Survey 246

***Location:*** The changes affect approximately 1,850 acres of vacant land east  
of Interstate Highway-10 on both sides of Transmountain Road  
and extend to the area between Tom Mays State Park and the  
Franklin Mountains State Park. This proposal only concerns land  
owned by the City of El Paso and administered by the El Paso  
Water Utilities (EPWU)-Public Service Board (PSB)

***Representative District:*** 1

***Area:*** 1,850 Acres

***Zoning:*** R-3 (Residential), PMD (Planned Mountain Development)

***Existing Use:*** Vacant

***Proposed Use:*** Residential, Commercial, Parks & Open Space

***Surrounding Land Uses:***

<b><i>North -</i></b>	R-3 (Residential) / Vacant
<b><i>South -</i></b>	R-3 (Residential) / Vacant
<b><i>East -</i></b>	PMD (Planned Mountain Development) / Franklin Mountains State Park
<b><i>West-</i></b>	R-3 (Residential) & R-3A (Residential) / Vacant

***Year 2025 Designation:*** Residential, Mixed-Use, Commercial, Industrial, and Parks &  
Open Space

**EL PASO MOUNTAIN COMMITTEE HEARING 25 FEBRUARY 2005 1:30 P.M.  
PLANNING DEPT. CONFERENCE ROOM 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR-CITY HALL**

**CITY PLAN COMMISSION HEARING 10 MARCH 2005 1:30 P.M.  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR-CITY HALL**

***Item #***\_\_\_\_\_



## **Amendments to *The Plan for El Paso***

### **General Information:**

This amendment proposes changes to the Proposed General Land Use Map of *The Plan for El Paso* and the Major Thoroughfare Map. The 1,850-acre parcel (with 1,037 developable acres) is located on El Paso's Westside, along Transmountain Road, east of Resler Drive and the Southern Union Gas Company easement, and west of the Franklin Mountains State Park.

The proposed study area contains a mix of land uses that blend commercial and residential with open space, natural arroyos, buffers, access to the Franklin Mountains State Park, and other community amenities. Taken together, these amenities are designed to create a desirable quality-of-life for all future residents. A band of open space, adjacent to the Franklin Mountains State Park, on the eastern part of the study area, is maintained. A network of natural arroyos feeds into the open space throughout the study area. The proposed land uses include:

<b>Total Acreage</b>	1,850 acres	<b>Total Developable Area</b>	1,037 acres
<b>Residential</b>	917.4 acres	<b>Commercial</b>	80.1 acres
<b>Parks &amp; Open Space</b>	640 acres	<b>Commercial/Office Park</b>	39.9 acres
<b>Average Dwelling Units per Developable Acre</b>	4.7	<b>Potential # of Dwelling Units</b>	4,873

On November 16, 2004, City Council passed a resolution, authorizing the Planning, Research & Development Department to revise the City's comprehensive plan, *The Plan for El Paso*, to conform to the PSB's Westside Master Plan [Please see attached resolution].

On Wednesday, February 2, 2005, approximately sixty members of the public attended a public meeting at Franklin High School. Public comments were numerous, focusing on the preservation of arroyos in their natural state and setting aside substantial open space, both natural and improved, and about the need to preserve the habitats and dwellers, both plant and animal. Comments received by phone and by e-mail were similar. Copies are attached.

### **Information to the Council:**

Planning, Research & Development facilitated an evening meeting at Franklin High School on Wednesday, February 2, 2005. Approximately 60 members of the public attended. Public comment was overwhelmingly for preservation of open space, protection of arroyos to be left in their natural state, and preservation of recreational opportunities, such as hiking and biking.

Received four phone calls on the matter. Also received four comments through e-mails. Consensus is to preserve arroyos and as much open space as possible in natural, undeveloped state. Recommendations from Lois Balin, Texas Parks & Wildlife's Urban & Wildlife Biologist, are somewhat more extensive; these are also attached.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

February 23, 2005: The Development Coordinating Committee voted unanimously to **recommend**

**APPROVAL** with the condition that:

1. The PSB coordinate with Traffic Engineering on one of the proposed arterials.

Staff recommends that the Proposed Land Use Map of the City's comprehensive plan, *The Plan for El Paso*, be modified in accordance with the El Paso Water Utilities Public Service Board Westside Master Plan. This recommendation is based on the following:

- *The Plan for El Paso* provides encouragement for master planning of large undeveloped areas into integrated developments that contain a balanced mix of open space, residential, commercial and industrial uses. A recommendation of *The Plan for El Paso* is the creation of specific study area plans. The area covered by the PSB's *Westside Master Plan* falls into the comprehensive plan's Study Area #3 for the Northwest Planning Area.
- The Year 2025 Projected General Land Use Maps, both current and proposed, show the site as a mixture of residential, commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and parks and open space. The Westside Master Plan's map shows a substantial portion will remain as undisturbed open space with some developed park sites. Residential density decreases closer to the mountainside. Apartment/Office development will cluster around Paso del Norte Boulevard. Commercial development will occur along Transmountain Road with some additional development along Paso del Norte Blvd where it connects with Artcraft Road. Two school sites with attached parks will be sited in the area, one on either side of Transmountain Road.

The *Westside Master Plan* calls for the removal of three arterials from *The Master Thoroughfare Plan*. These are to be deleted from the Master Thoroughfare Map.

**Related Actions by Other Committees:**

February 25, 2005: The El Paso Mountain Committee voted unanimously to **recommend APPROVAL** of both ordinances with the condition that:

1. There be a scenic buffer on the north side of Transmountain Road, comparable to the one on the south side.

March 10, 2005: City Plan Commission voted unanimously to **recommend APPROVAL** with the conditions that:

1. A scenic corridor along Transmountain Road of at least 100 feet on the north side of Transmountain Road.
2. Ask City Council to strongly consider use of the land trust to preserve natural arroyos and open space.
3. Ask Council to consider for its final decision the details of the agreement reached on November 12.

ATTACHMENTS: Resolution authorizing comprehensive plan amendment  
Draft Ordinances Amending Comprehensive Plan  
Public Commentary

# RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of El Paso owns an 1850 acre parcel of land on the West side of El Paso as shown on exhibit "A" attached hereto ("subject tract"), such parcel under the management and control of its Public Service Board ("PSB") pursuant to Ordinance #752; and

WHEREAS, the PSB has adopted Rule 14 which requires that prior to any public sale of PSB controlled land of more than fifty acres deemed inexpedient to the system, such land shall be master planned in order to provide for a general plan of development to include layout of arterial streets, open areas, sites for public facilities, utilities, and determination of the availability of existing services to the area; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council is of the opinion that such a master plan is of benefit to the citizens of El Paso as a tool in properly guiding the development of the subject tract; and

WHEREAS, as a result of extensive public stakeholder meetings and community input, a "Westside Master Plan" was developed and was approved by the PSB on May 26, 2004 as an appropriate plan for development of the subject tract;

## NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:


1. That the Westside Master Plan as proposed be modified to include the following concepts:
  - a. To improve the appearance and recreational use of any "hybrid drainage channel," concrete lining and fencing of such channel will be avoided in favor of terraces, rocks, plants, and other natural design features and staff is herein authorized to proceed forward with any necessary code amendments, including but not limited to those specific to fencing found in 20.08.310.B or otherwise.
  - b. An area of special concern to citizen stakeholders is the area of Flowpath 38A as it transitions from a natural arroyo east of Helen of Troy to a hybrid drainage channel west of Helen of Troy (the "Special Transition Area"). In this Special Transition Area, the design of the hybrid channel will be widened or there will be a combination of hybrid channel and natural open space so as to preserve as much as possible the existing undeveloped hiking/biking trail known as "Lost Dog Trail" as shown by approximate location as marked on exhibit "B."

Document #: 5873  
 Document Name: PLANNING/1/RESO/WESTSIDE PLAN-DIST1  
 Document Author: MWAT

2. That the Westside Master Plan, attached and incorporated as exhibit "C", as modified pursuant to Paragraph 1 above, is hereby approved (the "Approved Westside Master Plan") and shall serve as a base document for any and all land development applications submitted by the PSB for the subject tract and shall be used by the PSB in connection with other planning tools to provide the best development possible for the subject tract; and
3. That the Department of Planning, Research, & Development is herein directed to proceed with an amendment to the 2025 Plan for El Paso to include applicable portions of the Approved Westside Master Plan as a specific study area plan addendum, modification of the Projected General Land Use Map for the Northwest Planning Area, as well as a modification of the 2025 Proposed Thoroughfare System (collectively, the "Amended 2025 Plan"); and
4. That all future land sales containing portions of the subject tract shall contain, at a minimum, covenants necessary to effectuate applicable portions of the Amended 2025 Plan as same may be amended from time to time, and the Approved Westside Master Plan to the extent such provisions are not covered by the Amended 2025 Plan; and
5. That the Department of Planning, Research and Development is authorized to accept and process a PSB application for land study for the subject area consistent with the Approved Westside Master Plan once the Amended 2025 Plan has been approved. Should the PSB choose to file an application for a land study, future PSB land sales shall contain a covenant that requires any subsequent purchaser to rely on the Municipal Code in effect at the time of filing of such purchasers first application in a series of applications necessary for development, and not on the Municipal Code in effect at the time the PSB land study was submitted.

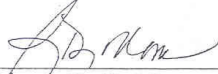
ADOPTED this 16<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2004.

THE CITY OF EL PASO

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Wardy  
Mayor

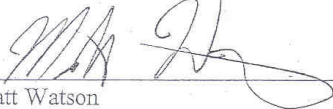
Document #: 5873  
Document Name: PLANNING/1/RESO/WESTSIDE PLAN-DIST1  
Document Author: MWAT

ATTEST:



Richarda Duffy Momsen  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Matt Watson  
Assistant City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:



George Sarmiento, Director of  
Planning, Research, & Development



Patricia D. Adauto  
Deputy City Manager for Building &  
Planning Services

Document #: 5873  
Document Name: PLANNING/1/RESO/WESTSIDE PLAN-DISTI  
Document Author: MWAT

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**AN ORDINANCE INCORPORATING THE EL PASO WATER UTILITIES PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD WESTSIDE MASTER PLAN AS A SPECIFIC STUDY AREA PLAN INTO THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, THE PLAN FOR EL PASO, AND WHICH PLAN SHALL AMEND THE PLAN FOR EL PASO AND THE YEAR 2025 GENERAL LAND USE MAP INCORPORATED THEREIN.**

**WHEREAS,** *The Plan for El Paso* was initially adopted by the El Paso City Council on April 27, 1999, and subsequently amended on February 18, 2003 and January 14, 2004, pursuant to the provisions of Section 213.003 of the Texas Local Government Code as the comprehensive plan for the City; and

**WHEREAS,** the comprehensive plan serves as a general guide for the future growth and development of the City to promote public health, safety and welfare; and

**WHEREAS,** a specific recommendation of *The Plan for El Paso* is the creation of specific study area plans that will serve as separate policy documents which give general support to the objectives of the City's comprehensive plan; and

**WHEREAS,** the El Paso Water Utilities Public Service Board has approved a Westside Master Plan for a portion of the Northwest Planning Area that was the result of extensive public stakeholder meetings and public input; and

**WHEREAS,** the El Paso City Council on November 16, 2004 directed the Planning, Research and Development Department to proceed with an amendment to include applicable portions of the Approved Westside Master Plan as a specific study area plan addendum to *The Plan of El Paso*; and

**WHEREAS,** the City Plan Commission, after conducting a public hearing, recommends the adoption of the changes to the *The Plan of El Paso* as herein enumerated; and

**WHEREAS,** the El Paso City Council finds that the amendment to *The Plan of El Paso* as herein enumerated will have no negative impact upon the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the City, and that the study area plan will carry out the purpose and spirit of the policies expressed in *The Plan for El Paso*.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:**

1. That the El Paso City Council hereby adopts the proposed Specific Study Area Plan for PSB Westside Master Plan Properties attached hereto as Exhibit "A" as a specific study area plan for the subject area, and that same shall be incorporated into The Plan for El Paso for all purposes, including amending the Year 2025 Projected General Land Use Map for the long-range development of the Northwest Planning Area.
2. Except as herein modified, *The Plan for El Paso* and its related documents shall remain in full force and effect as to the long-range general policies for guiding growth and development in the City.

**PASSED AND APPROVED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2005.**

**THE CITY OF EL PASO**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Wardy  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Momsen  
City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

**APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Matt Watson  
Assistant City Attorney  
Pcdocs#9938

\_\_\_\_\_  
George Sarmiento  
Director of Planning, Research, & Development

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_**



## ***Exhibit A***

### ***Specific Study Area Plan for PSB Westside Master Plan Properties***

This document and the accompanying maps constitute a specific study area plan amendment to the Plan for El Paso. The study area is specifically that property addressed in the PSB Westside Master Plan Land Study submission of January 2005, consisting of approximately 1850 acres of City owned land straddling Transmountain Road and abutting the Franklin Mountains State Park on the western side of the Franklin Mountains. The location is shown as provided in Figure 1.

The land use plan for the study area contains a mix of land uses that blends commercial and residential with open space, natural arroyos, buffers, access to the Franklin Mountain State Park, and other community amenities. Taken together, these amenities are designed to create a desirable quality-of-life for all future residents. A large band of open space adjacent to the Franklin Mountains State Park on the eastern part of the study area is maintained. A network of natural arroyos supplements the open space throughout the study area.

#### **Land Use Characteristics**

Total Land Area	1,850 acres
Potential Number of Dwelling Units	4,873 Dwelling Units
Potential Amount of Commercial Development	1,707,008 square feet
Acreage of Parks/Open Space	644 Acres
Developable Acres	1,037 Acres
Roads and Infrastructure	168 Acres
Average Dwelling Units/Developable Acre	4.7

#### **PROPOSED LAND USE CATEGORIES**

The current approved land use map is shown in Figure 2. The land use map for this amendment, once approved, is shown in Figure 3. The amended map divides the study area into different land use categories designated by color and further detailed with a two or three letter acronym. The categories reflect the allowable future land uses and development intensities intended for that segment of the study area. The land use map and text will be used as the major implementation tool for carrying out development review processes. It does not specify zoning for any area. Instead, it should be seen to guide future zoning decisions in a way that ensures that any proposed zoning conforms to the density guidelines issued herein. Along with this specific study area plan, the City Council of El Paso, in a resolution dated Nov 16, 2004, directed that all sales of land within the study area contain “covenants necessary to effectuate applicable portions” of this plan. It is recognized in the same resolution that this plan may be “amended from time to time.”

#### **Residential Land Use Categories**

The land use map designates four residential land use categories that provide for single-family and multi-family housing at varying densities. The type and intensity of development for each category is described below:

##### **Low Density Residential (LD)**

Low Density Residential (LD) category shall have no more than 2 single-family dwelling units/gross acre. There are approximately 141.5 acres of LD residential land use within the study area.

### **Medium Density Residential (MD)**

Medium Density Residential (MD) category shall have no more than 4.5 single-family dwelling units/gross acre. MD land makes up 190.7 acres.

### **Medium High Density (MHD)**

Medium High Density (MHD) category shall have single-family dwelling units at no more than 6 dwelling units/ gross acre. MHD land makes up 511.7 acres. The MHD land is intended as a transition zone between highest density residential and office development and the lower density residential development.

### **Apartment Office (A/O)**

Apartment/Office category shall allow higher density residential land use to co-locate with office uses, thus creating mixed use nodes that would allow people to live in close proximity to where they work. A/O land use is intended to promote pedestrian activity, transit use, and lower incidences of single-occupant vehicle travel. A/O designated land accounts for 73.5 acres.

## **Commercial Land Use**

There are two primary commercial land use categories located within the study area.

### **Commercial (C)**

This category is intended to identify locations for commercial development types of varying intensities and designs. Commercial land use is to be located adjacent to the higher density residential development, with the intent of promoting transit use and pedestrian activity. There are approximately 80.1 acres of commercial land designation in the study area.

### **Commercial/Office Park (C/O)**

The Commercial Office Park category is planned for more intense /office and commercial development to occur. These areas are intended for heavier commercial and business uses and to provide significant employment opportunities for the residents of the area without leading to incompatibility between land uses. The business park category covers approximately 39.9 acres.

## **Parks and Open Space**

A major feature of the land use plan is the designation of the parks and open space categories. There are over 500 acres of open space, the majority of which is located on the eastern side of the property. This open space provides a buffer between developed areas and the Franklin Mountain State Park. Within the developed areas of the site, additional open space is provided by preserving the majority of the arroyos running through the property in their natural state.

## **Parks and Park/Ponds (P and P/P)**

There are 10 small, pocket-scaled parks locations designated in the study area. Nine of these parks include drainage ponding areas. Each park is positioned to serve the distinct neighborhoods that are envisioned. Developed parkland accounts for 114.3 total acres within the land study area.

## **Open Space/Natural Arroyos (OS and NA)**

Open space will be one of the defining features of the study area. It is the intention of this plan that land designated as open space or as natural arroyos will remain in an undisturbed natural state except that existing undeveloped hiking/biking trails, as defined below, will be permitted. The open space is located on the eastern part of the property, abutting the Franklin Mountains State Park, providing a buffer between the park and development. In addition, the majority of arroyos on the property will be left in their natural state and form important linkages between the development and the open space. A total of 530.1 acres of open space or natural arroyos is designated on the land use map.

## **Drainage and Water Facilities (D/T, RSV and Pond)**

Some areas are designated as for drainage and water facilities. D/T indicates an improved drainage channel with a multi-use trail incorporated alongside. RSV indicates a reservoir location and Pond is a retention pond. Two ponds without parks are also designated on the land use plan.

## **Trail System**

A network of trails should be located throughout the property, capable of serving both recreational and transportation purposes. This system is shown in Figure 4.

There are three different types of trails on the property. They are:

- ***Multi-use Trails*** – Trail that can be used for jogging, biking, and/or walking. These trails link commercial and office areas to residential development.
- ***Developed Hiking/Biking Trails*** – These types of trails are the most prevalent trail in the development. These trails run along the side of most of the major roadways developed within the land study area including Paseo del Norte, Helen of Troy Road, and Transmountain Road (Transmountain Road already has significant bicycle activity for those people accessing trails in the Franklin Mountains State Park).
- ***Undeveloped Hiking/Biking Trails*** – Undeveloped trails are the unpaved off road trails that exist along arroyos and in the open space areas due to previous usage. These trails should be no more than six feet wide and the surface should be the existing soil. Minimal or no development or construction is required and existing natural vegetation should comprise the landscaping.
- ***Trail Heads*** – There are three developed trailheads designated in open space areas. These trail heads provide bicyclists and hikers with a staging area to begin their rides or hikes into the open space or Franklin Mountains State Park. These trail heads will have parking areas and other amenities. Roads to the trailhead will be provided by the site developers and included in their development plans.

## **Community Facilities**

To serve the public service needs of area residents, various community facilities are planned for the area. The following community facility locations are indicated on the land use map:

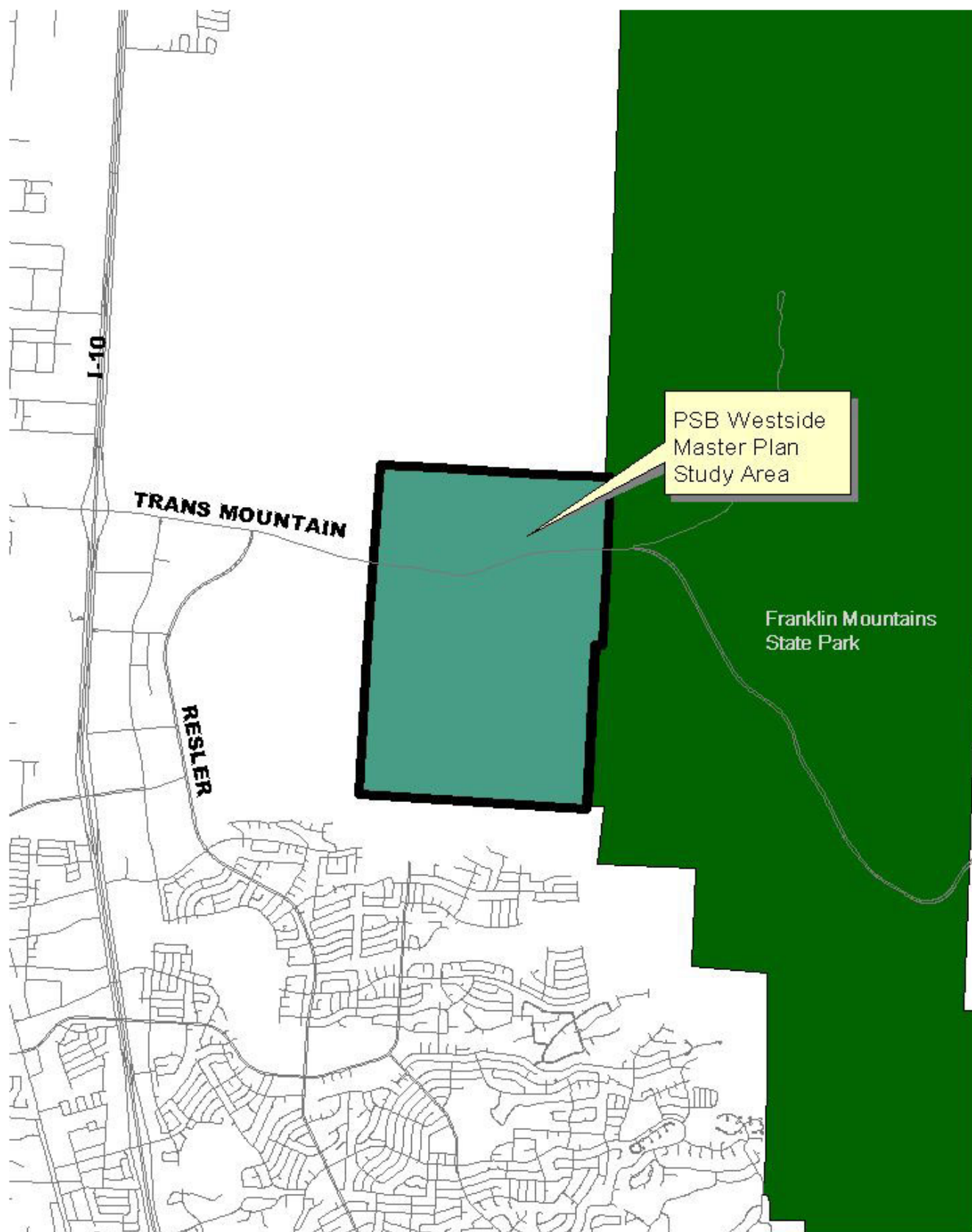
### **Public Schools (MS and ES)**

The Canutillo ISD has indicated that two elementary schools (ES) and one middle school (MS) will be needed to serve the anticipated population. In addition, a desire was expressed by several entities for parks and schools to be co-located, which has been reflected in the land use plan. All school sites have also been planned adjacent to the trail network for more efficient and safe pedestrian access.

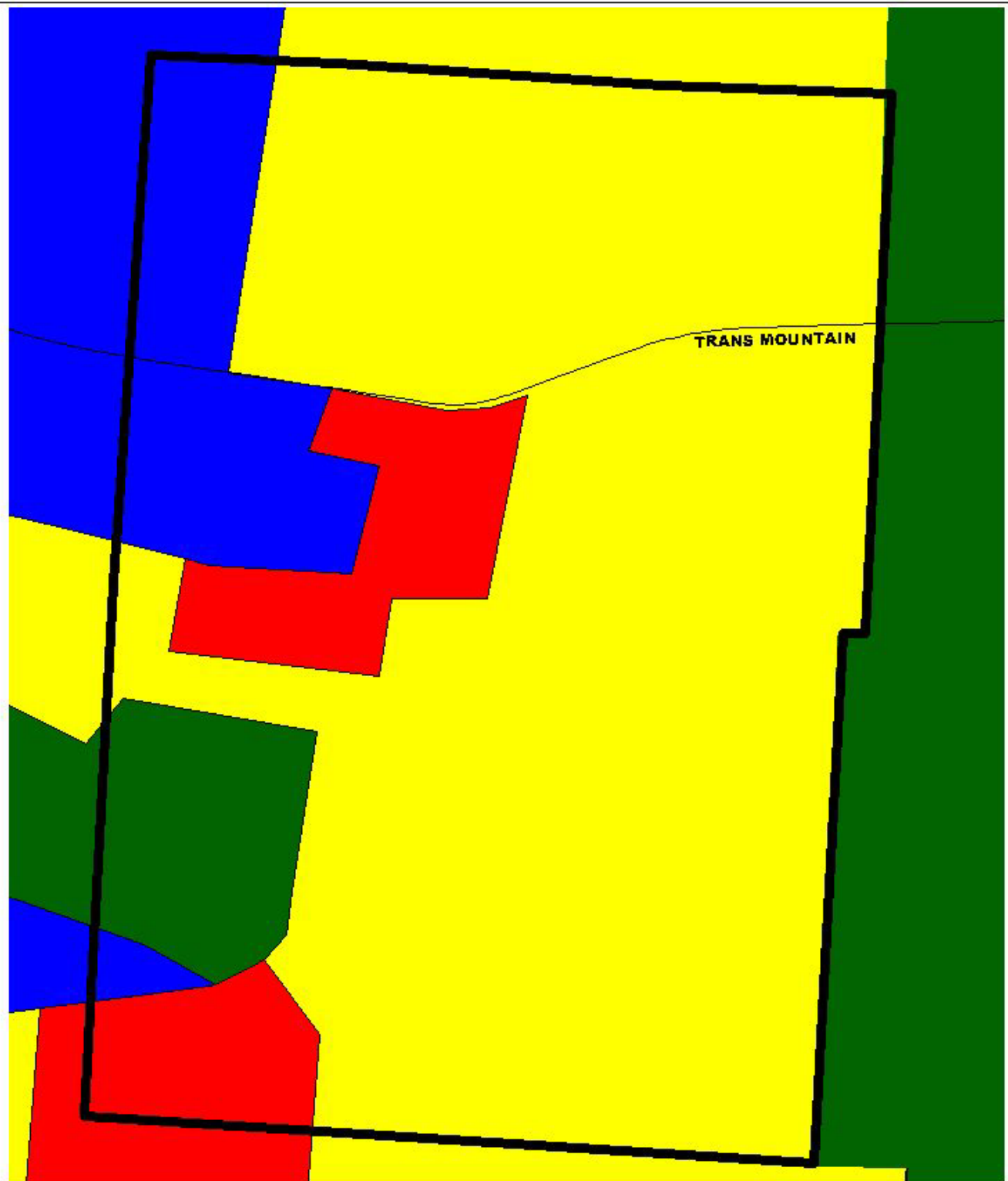
The elementary schools are located central to the neighborhoods and will generally serve an area within ½ to 1-mile radius. One elementary school site is located north of Transmountain Road while the other is planned for the southern part of the property. In addition to being co-located with the parks, the southern elementary school will also be located in the vicinity of the land study area's middle school.

### **Public Safety Facilities (FS)**

There will be a need for a fire department substation (FS). The substation should be located in the southwestern part of the property off of Paseo del Norte.



**Figure 1: Study Area Location**



#### Legend



Study Area Boundary

#### Land Use Categories



Commercial



Industrial



Residential

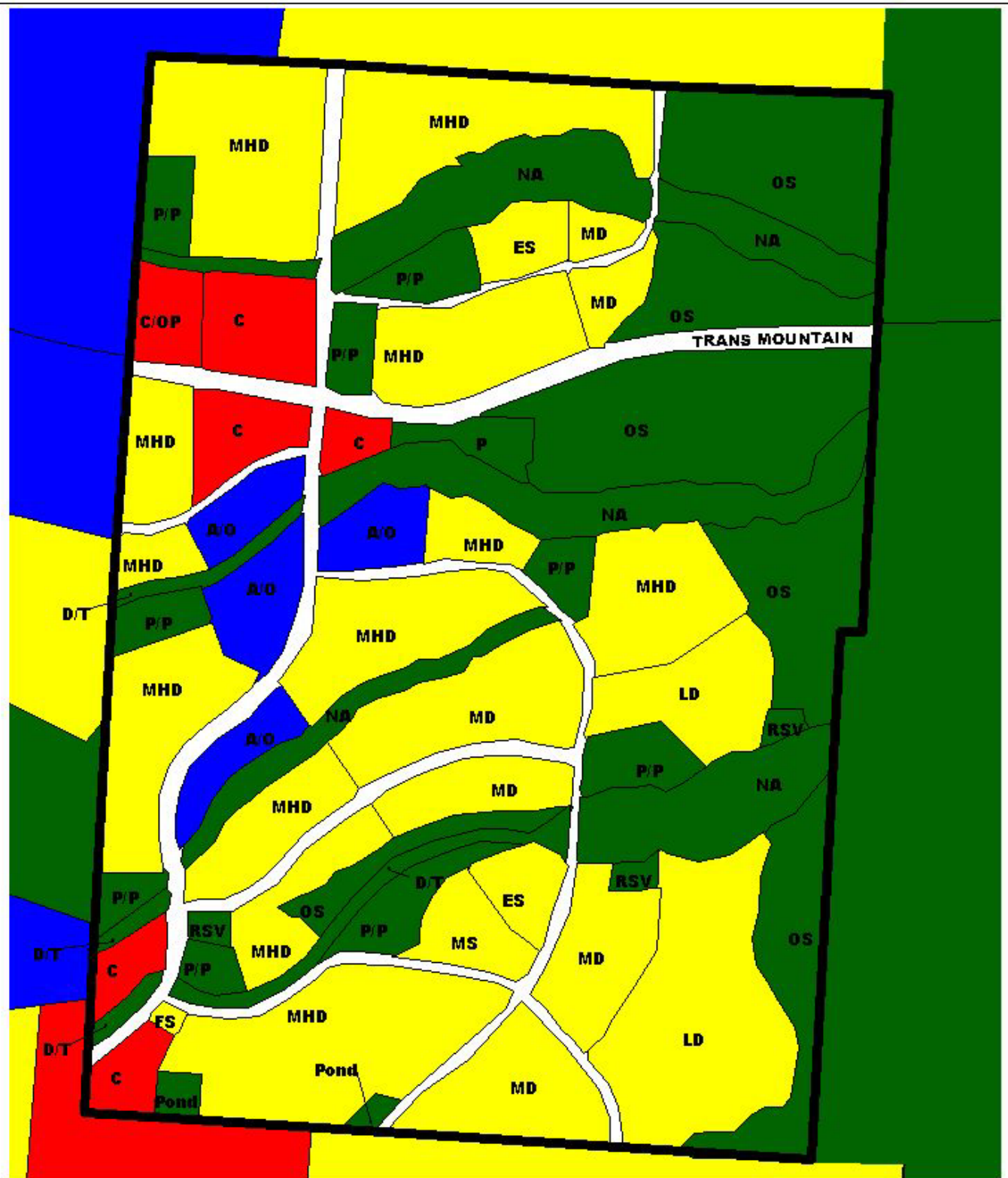


Mixed Use



Parks and Open Space

**Figure 2: Current Approved General Land Use Map**



### Legend



Study Area Boundary

### Land Use Categories

Commercial



Industrial



Residential



Mixed Use



Parks and Open Space

**Figure 3: Proposed General Land Use Map**





Figure  
4

# TRAIL AMENITIES PLAN



ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2025 PROPOSED THOROUGHFARE SYSTEM AS DETAILED IN THE MAP ATLAS OF THE PLAN FOR EL PASO AND ITS RELATED DOCUMENTS AS ORIGINALLY APPROVED BY THE EL PASO CITY COUNCIL IN 1999, AN AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED.

**WHEREAS,** *The Plan for El Paso* was formally adopted as the City's comprehensive plan by City Council on April 27, 1999 pursuant to provisions of the Texas Local Government Code now codified as Section 213.002; and

**WHEREAS,** the comprehensive plan serves as a general guide for the future growth and Development of the City to promote public health, safety and welfare; and

**WHEREAS,** its adoption was based on the recommendations of the comprehensive plan Advisory Committee following numerous public meetings and working sessions; and

**WHEREAS,** a well planned transportation system is a key element for improving the quality of life, by balancing neighborhood concerns with provision of access for commerce and mobility for personal travel; and

**WHEREAS,** the Development Coordinating Committee ("DCC") has analyzed the possible effect on future traffic congestion, and

**WHEREAS,** the City Plan Commission, after conducting a public hearing, recommends the adoption of the changes to the Year 2025 Proposed Thoroughfare System map as herein enumerated; and

**WHEREAS,** the City Council finds that the adoption of amendments herein to *The Plan for El Paso* pertaining to the thoroughfare alignments as herein enumerated will have no negative impact upon the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the City,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:**

That the 2025 Proposed Thoroughfare System, as detailed in the Map Atlas of *The Plan for El Paso*, is herein amended as described below and as more particularly shown in the attached and incorporated Exhibit "A."

**Northwest Planning Area.  
Representative District 8**

- Delete two proposed collector arterials crossing Transmountain Road and one proposed section of collector arterial north of Transmountain Road. Reclassify sections of collector arterials within PSB Westside Master Plan area to minor arterials with bicycle lanes. Reclassify section of Proposed Paseo del Norte to Major Arterial and add multi-use trail to Paseo del Norte within PSB Westside Master Plan area. Add a collector arterial and reconfigure alignments within PSB Westside Master Plan Area.

**PASSED AND APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, **2005.**

**THE CITY OF EL PASO**

---

Joe Wardy  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

---

Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

**APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:**

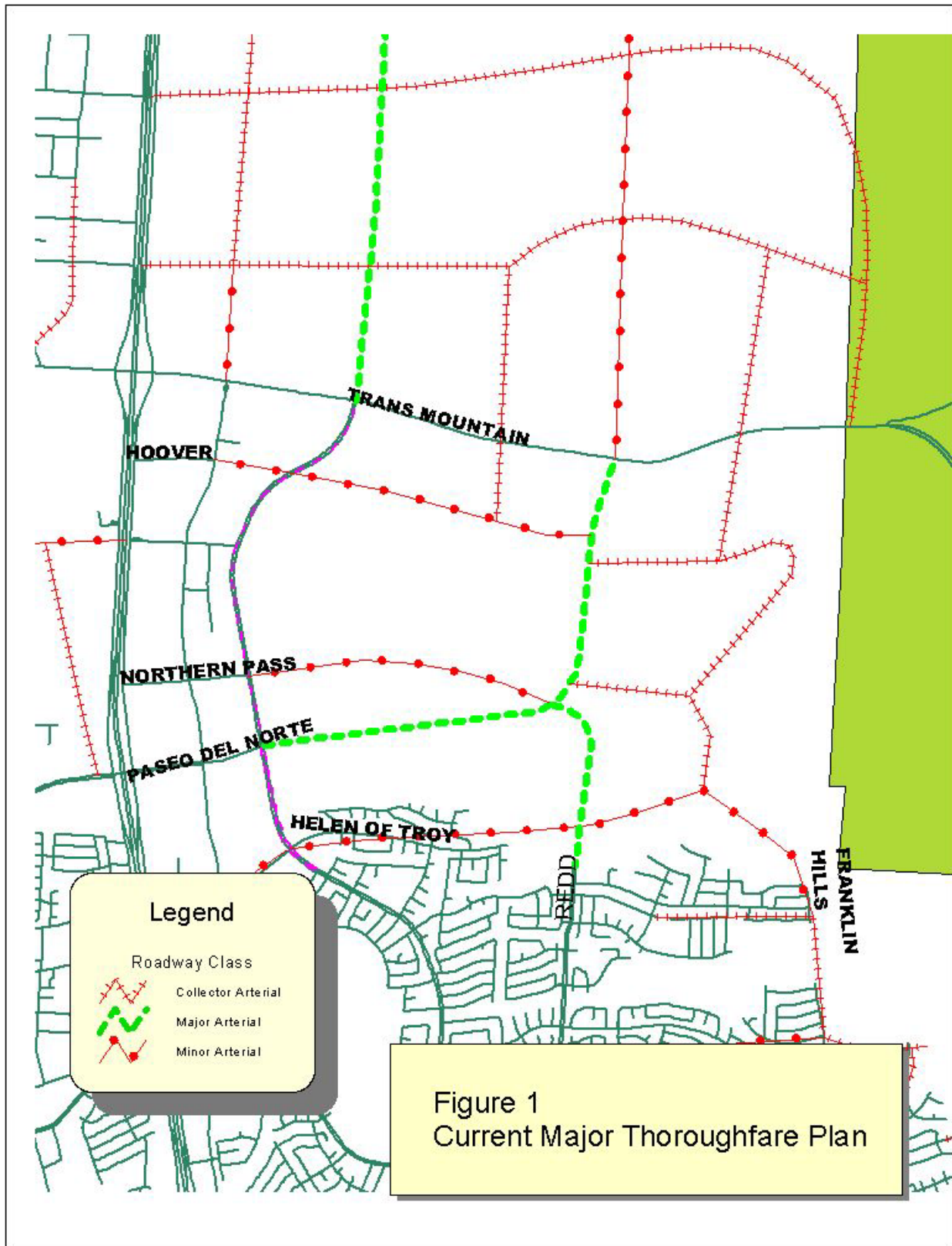
---

Matt Watson  
Assistant City Attorney

---

George Sarmiento, Director  
Planning, Research and Development

## Exhibit "A"



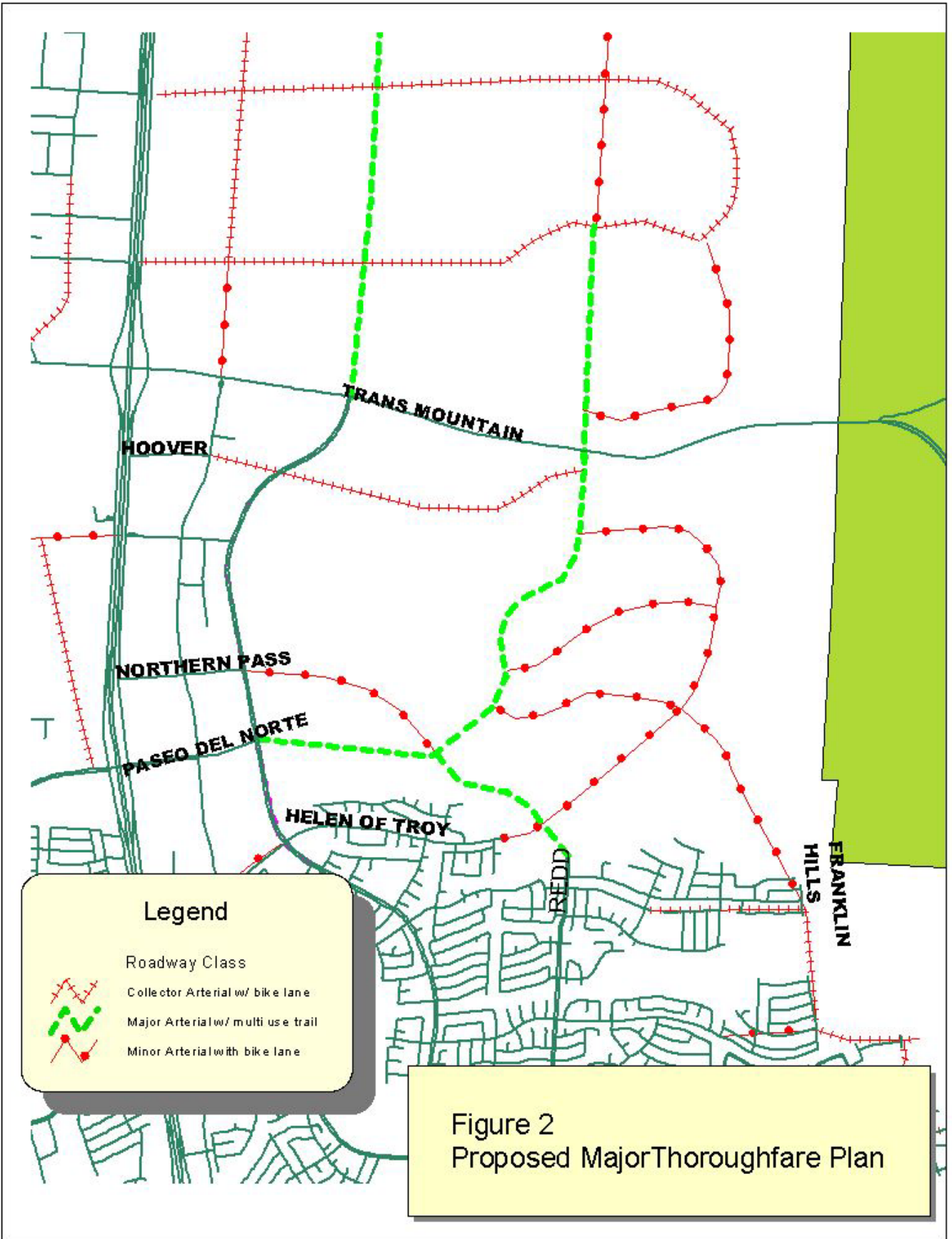
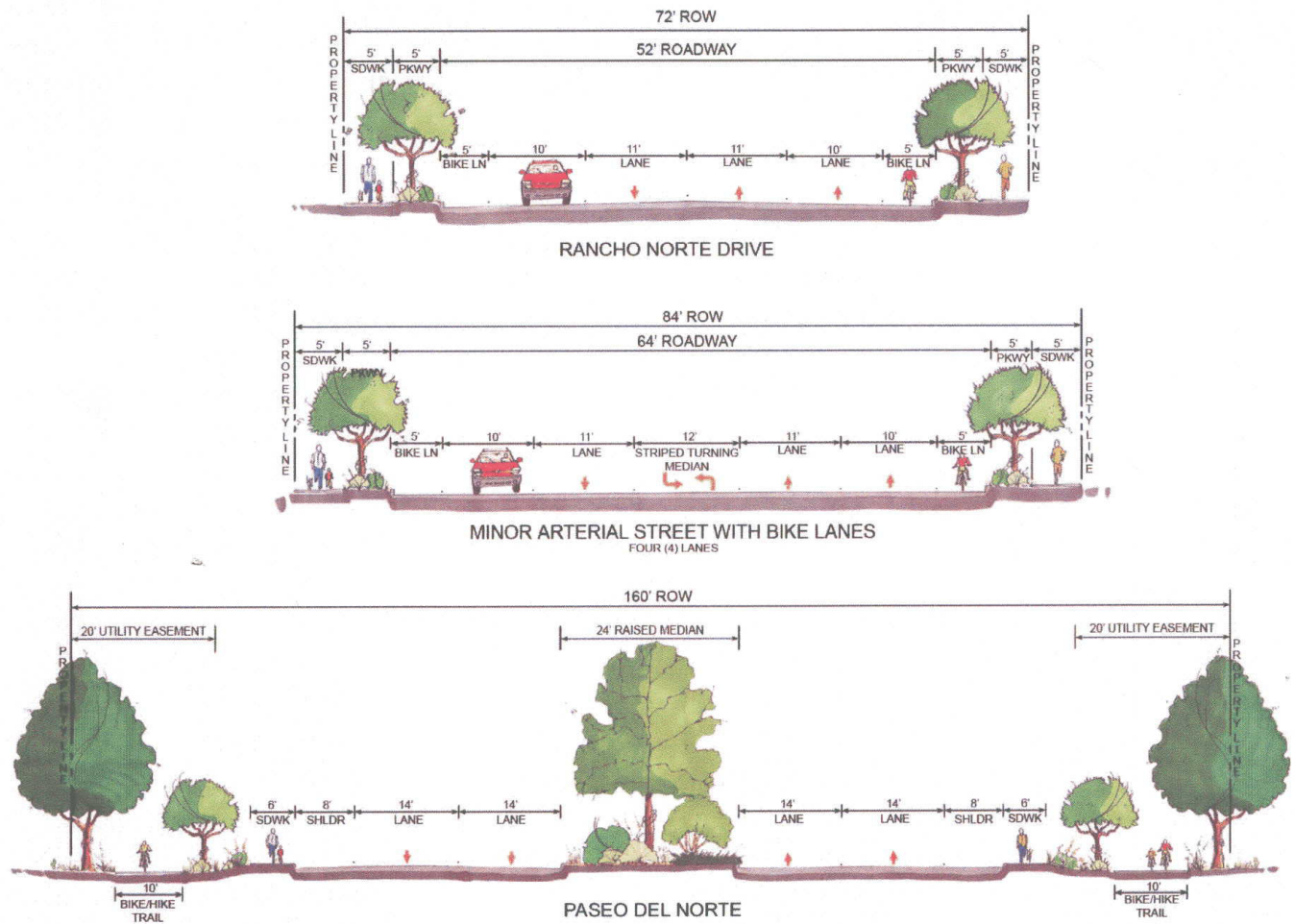




Figure 3 Proposed Cross Sections



## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

From: Joyce Locke  
Kllocke1@elp.rr.com  
Telephone:  
Other Concerns:

I have lived in El Paso 25 years on the West side of the mountain and I have seen this city grow. I would hate to see us continue to destroy what we all love about the city and one of the reasons we choose to stay here and that is the Franklin Mountains. As we continue our city growth we also continue to destroy our desert land and mountains by building housing, manufacturing plants, schools, etc. right at the base of the mountain taking away the natural beauty in the name of progress. I don't know what the solution is but I sure don't think that building right up to the base of our mountain and in arroyos and in desert park land is the right answer. In Some way, the city has to conform with the land, the mountains and our desert terrain for us all to be happy. We can not continue to take the natural land and moutains that have been here for centries and build on them. We cannot continue to live a foot higher than our neighbors and expect to have the view of our mountains. Please don't continue to destroy our city beauty by building up to or on top of our mountain. Let there remain some natural beauty as intended.

From: Carol Tures  
caroltures@elp.rr.com  
Telephone: 581-6246  
Other Concerns:

Dear Sir/Madam,

My husband and I moved to El Paso in 1976. A few years later there was a huge rainfall and many westside homes were ruined, homes built without consideration for water drainage patterns.

At that time, many persons were clamoring for an end to building in arroyos. I thought that ordinances had been put into place then to protect homes and protect arroyos.

It is easy to see how someone might purchase arroyo land with an eye to development, hoping to be able to get away with doing so. I think that the city not only has to be wary about protecting developers whose careless planning might lose them their land investment.

Rather, the city also has to be concerned about liability, from homeowners living in arroyos who might not be aware of the water runoff problems and might sue the city for damage to their homes or even loss of life.

Everyone will know that the city could have prevented it.

Sincerely,  
Carol Tures  
5829 Vista Corona  
El Paso 79912  
581-6246

From: Bill Springer  
bill\_phil@yahoo.com  
Telephone: 584-8342  
Other Concerns:

I would like to see respect for the arroyos, and a steady and honest eye on who is benefiting financially from the allocations. Above all I am opposed to deals which enrich the rich at the largess of the commissioners, or whoever is in charge of protecting public lands.

Courtney Brown  
6524 Camino Puente, 79912

In favor of protecting the mountain and abutting land. Opposed to any development because enough of the mountain has already been destroyed.

Suzy Schneider  
6707 Balnchard, 79902

Wants to ensure a buffer for the mountain to protect it from future development.

Kyoe Weaver  
759-0429

Leave land in natural state. Do not develop.

Unnamed Citizen

Leave land as natural open space.

*Lois Balin, Urban and Wildlife Biologist*  
Texas Parks and Wildlife  
200 N. Clark Drive  
El Paso, TX 79905  
(915) 774-9603

The Revised Land Use Plan is significantly improved. The amount of open space areas has expanded considerably. The 102.2-acre and 40.3 acre LD lots placed contiguous to the OS and NA lands are an example of commendable conservation planning; however it is recommended to have no MD or MHD lots next to OS and NA lands. The two MD lots located west and adjacent to the 102-acre LD lot is a good example of conservation design. Changing the number of roads crossing Transmountain Road from 4 to 1 is also praiseworthy. Although the Land Use Plan is better, I am providing some comments and recommendations that will further enhance the plan.

Comments on Arroyos. There are major differences between a water conveyance channel and an arroyo. Arroyos are by definition, any substantial ephemeral waterway, such as riverbeds or



large creeks that occur in arid desert regions as opposed to a water conveyance channel that delivers water from one place to another. Everything is connected in natural systems. Arroyos are living organisms and natural highways for wildlife. By their very nature, they contain the largest amount of vegetation (density) and the greatest amount of plant and wildlife species (species richness). In order to survive extreme environmental conditions or to maintain the ecological diversity of our flora and fauna, wildlife must be able to reside, travel and migrate from the mountains along arroyos to the river or other lands.

When the sources of our greatest biological abundance disappear, so will the plants and animals that provide ecological stability to the land. When habitat becomes scarce wildlife will disperse into the city looking for food and shelter. Homeowner's pets will likely become coyote's lunch or dinner. Deer and other browsing animals will destroy landscapes or cause injury to humans. Other animals and pests entering the city may carry diseases, such as rabies and the plague.

Comments on Arroyos, Wildlife and Connectivity. Are there adequate wildlife corridors in the Land Use Plans? Figure 3.1 shows the OS lands in relation to the other land uses. There are two areas of MHD lands (90.1-acre and 26.1-acre) next to 14-acres of OS, P/P lands. In addition there is a 21.4-acre MS and a 15.0-acre ES lands that *break the continuity of natural OS* from the FMSP to the edge of the Land Use Study border.

Recommendations #1. It is advantageous for conservation to have substantial areas of natural buffer zones along both sides of the hybrid channel and arroyos. All the connecting strips of NA should be wider through the A/O lots crossing Paseo del Norte. It is also recommended to improve the connection between the 10.0-acre P/P to the NA land on the East Side of Paseo del Norte.

Recommendations #2. All arroyos in the Land Use Plan need safeguard borders and erosion protection mechanisms. How close to the arroyos will the developers be allowed to build? The Ideal (gold standard for conservation development techniques) would be no building in the arroyo, on the banks of the arroyo or within a protective buffer zone (300 feet) on either side of the arroyo. This would include arroyos, mountains, foothill habitats and areas of endangered plant species. There should be no development in or within 300 ft. on either side of an arroyo in order to have a substantial land buffering the arroyos.

Recommendations #3. Arroyos need permanent protection. Arroyos are purportedly protected now by the PSB and transfer of land to the City Council. The city claims they will not sell any of the ecologically sensitive areas in question, but for how long? The arroyos are *protected now* by the current City Council; will they continue to be protected in the future City Planners and Council? What is to stop the city from enforcing or changing the restrictions? Are there restrictions on what developers can do? Definitive and permanent protection of arroyos and other ecologically sensitive areas are needed now.

Recommendations #4. It is imperative to look at the "big picture." Now is the time to define the primary and secondary ecologically important natural open space lands. Arroyos and other ecologically important areas are protected elsewhere in the southwest. The long-range master planning needs to create special ordinance or codes protect these lands now to accomplish

the mission in The Plan for El Paso. It is crucial to expedite these changes now before it is too late to design connectivity of natural open spaces that will ensure the survival of our native flora and fauna.

#### Comments on Proposed Land Uses.

Open Space (OP). There is a vast difference between open space and natural open space. Open space could mean an abandoned farm field or concrete parking lots. I recommend that the OS Land Use be changed to Natural Open Space (NOS) to reflect the intended meaning of the land use. Open space, natural areas (NA) and Park areas should always retain their natural native Chihuahuan vegetation. How will the PSB and the City of El Paso implement permanent protection of open space and city-owned land?

*The Land Use Plan for Residential Land Use contains a variety of different land uses designed to create desirable quality-of-life for all future residents; however, the proposed land use densities or locations are usually not consistent with those values.*

Low Density Residential (LD). The two large areas of (LD) located adjacent to OS and NA lands are in harmony with a conservation design plan. Having only LD juxtaposed to the PMD and FMSP is the ideal and desirable condition from a conservation standpoint.

Medium Density Residential (MD). The Medium Density Residential (MD) land is planned at 4.5 dwelling units/acre. The MD land consists of 190.7 acres and comprises 858 dwelling units. There is some MD land in the PMD zoning areas. The MD areas should not be located in PMD lands or adjacent to any designated natural open space areas.

Medium High Density (MHD). The Medium High-Density (MHD) land provides for single-family homes at 6 dwelling units/acre. A total of 3,070 dwelling units on 511.7 acres are estimated. MHD land is located throughout the land study area and meant to function as a transition zone between highest density residential and office development and the lower density residential development.

Conservation planning techniques were not used for the locations of numerous MHD lands. For example, the 48.0-acre MHD lot directly North of Transmountain road will eliminate both valuable scenic views and loss of habitat for wildlife. Almost half of this acreage is in the PMD. There are numerous arroyos that contain the food and cover necessary for survival in addition to serving as wildlife corridors, places that wildlife use to disperse and travel. Another example is the 68.6-acre MHD lot is located directly next to a large arroyo and directly west of designated open space (OS) land. Still another example is the 15.2-acre MHD lot located adjacent to NA, OS and P/P lands. Worthy to note is the 44.7-acre MHD lot next to OS and NA.

Recommendations #1. The OS areas are the buffer zone between development and the FMSP. El Paso's natural open spaces are rapidly being encroached by development; therefore it is critical to save the areas of greatest ecological and scenic importance. The primary areas of ecological sensitivity should be defined and designated as lands to preserve. This would include arroyos, mountains, foothill habitats and areas of endangered plant species. It is essential to have a substantial amount of land buffering the arroyos.

Recommendations #2. Development should proceed down the mountain in ascending

order of density. The low density (LD) should always be contiguous to the natural open space areas. Only LD areas should be adjacent to the FMSP. The habitats located in the hillside development or foothills areas should be (LD) or (MD). No MHD areas should be located directly East of the PMD lands. Areas of MHD should be located outside of hillside development or PMD lands.

Recommendations #3. The methods for cluster development need improvement. MHD and MD should be transferred away from open space areas. The density zones in areas next to open space land should be revised. Currently the maximum dwelling units per gross acre are calculated based on the percent average slope of the property. Dwelling densities are determined from an array of average slopes ranging from 0-5% to 40.1% or greater. Other arid southwestern desert cities, such as Tucson and Albuquerque, have a development ceiling at 20% to 25% slopes. Zero density dwellings are recommended in areas having greater than 20% slope.

The minimum amount of open space to be provided should be based on the percent average slopes of 20% or less. Based on the objectives of the PMD and the Comprehensive Plan for El Paso, the entire system needs re-calibrated. The density permitted and the amount of open space dedication should be based on the percent average slope for slopes of 20% or less. The total density of the development areas need not change. The densities can remain the same and the densities acquired in LD and MD can be transferred to the MHD areas away from OS and NA. This method will not only facilitate the protection of the mountain and hillsides from erosion and other damaging effects of development that occur at slopes greater than 20% but it will also reflect the amount of the fragile, unique and natural undisturbed open space needed to buffer the FMSP. Additionally, this method more realistically satisfies the goals of the Comprehensive Plan for El Paso.

Recommendations #4. Parks. Parks should always retain as much of their natural condition as possible. Landscaping should consist of native Chihuahuan vegetation.

Comments on Planned Mountain Development District (PMD). Some of the many purposes of the PMD include the protection of significant natural features of the mountain development area and the preservation of the city's unique visual setting as part of the City of El Paso's Comprehensive Plan. Another purpose is to allow the transfer of residential densities through clustering of dwellings in order to preserve larger areas of open space. Figure 3.2 illustrates commercial (C), Commercial/Office Park (C/O), Medium High Density (MHD), and Medium Density Residential (MD) all planned in the PMD. The eastern portion of the study areas as well as strips along both sides of Trans-Mountain Road are within the PMD zoning. These PMD-zoned properties were changed to Commercial and C/OP zoning without public meetings, public comments or explanations. This habitat has now lost its scenic, recreational and ecological values.

In the past (1989) the PSB made a sizable contribution towards open space in El Paso by generously selling about 6,834-acres to the FMSP. Although 2,870 some acres of that land are located in northwest El Paso by the land study, this can no longer be considered a substantial contribution to maintaining open space in El Paso by current standards. Natural open space in El Paso is diminishing rapidly. PSB land has already been sold to developers in NE El Paso amongst our semi-pristine valuable wildlife and watersheds. The Public Service Board (PSB) is

charged with the challenging and difficult work of managing the most valuable watersheds, scenic views, wildlife habitat and native plant communities in El Paso for the City of El Paso, which is ultimately the citizens of El Paso.

Recommendations. Mitigation efforts for loss of PMD land along the scenic highway with commercial and office zoning might include putting more natural open space in the Land Use Study Area.